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than modern glass blowers. Each color in ancient glass partakes in some measure of the hues of its neighbor. The ornaments around the glass vary in form or in color, and all combine to make an antique whole, unlike the modern style of coloring, which consists in multiplying clear and decided primary tints, with never a shade or different colored ornament between them, to help to blend and break away their crudeness and intensity. Ruskin notices this error when he remarks "that no color harmony is of high order unless involv-

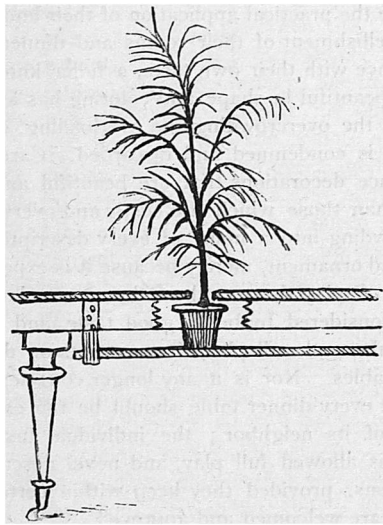


FIG. 1.—DINNER-TABLE DECORATIONS.

ing indescribable tints," while in these few words he compresses into small compass an excellent precept as a guide both in flower and other decorations, but more especially in regard to china and glass. Flowers already follow this rule, as can be verified by a careful examination of some of the brightest of them, in which, where the bright and contrasting colors meet, a third shade is introduced, a sort of neutral tint that harmonizes with both, and thus blends two crude contrasts together. Blue shades into crimson before it runs into white; scarlet is mixed with white ere it touches the yellow, and white shades into a blue purple before it approaches the scarlet.

Remembering the softening and blending thus carried on by nature will help much in the selection of colored ornaments and more particularly of colored glass. The glasses whose stems are colored with some tint not too brilliant, such as crimson or yellow green, and their bowls another harmonizing color, will be found very effective, especially when one of the colors is repeated either in the salt cellars or the specimen glasses that stand before each guest. Dark blues are not good colors for artificial light, nor is the deep green so often used for hock glasses recommended, as it is too opaque a color to reflect light, and it absorbs a great quantity while throwing a dullness and heaviness over the table if much used. Light greens of olive and yellow shades are all good. Yellow of all shades is effective, especially the bronze yellow that gives the appearance of a gold thread run through the glass. Pale sea blues are good, or any light blue that is slightly mixed with yellow, but dark blues must be avoided for the same reason as dark greens. White opaque lines upon clear glass, or pink, blue, and white lines upon the same are good, and soft shades of crimson will be found effective. Clear glass knots and twists about the colored glass will be found to help in the general harmony.

Another important point in table decoration is the color and texture of the linen used for napkins and table-cloths. The present dazzling white tablecloth is giving place to softly tinted tablecloths, as it is found that they enhance the beauty of what is laid upon them. A pale écru-colored tablecloth of coarse texture, with a bold pattern upon it, such as palm leaves or vine leaves, will throw up and improve many articles placed upon it, where a glossy and exquisitely fine white linen cloth will deaden the white of the china, take from the clearness of the white flowers, and detract from their beauty. Handsome borders and deep fringes make a good finish to all cloths, and increase their rich appearance. The napkins should match the tablecloths in color, but not in texture; they should be of the finest and softest materials. Soft colored borderings and handsome fringes to these are good, and are a re-

vival of the tastes of the Greeks and Romans, who were extremely fanciful over their napery, delighting in deep borderings and fringes, and rarely permitting two of one pattern to be used at one time. Crewel will be found useful for working borders and handsome edgings to the napkins, as the colors used will bear frequent washing.

Where the style of ornament used does not throw dark shadows beneath it, the lighting of a table should be managed from above, either by gas or wax chandeliers, or silver branches containing wax candles placed at intervals down the table; but where vases are used with three tiers, or any vases with double rows of flowers, the light must also come from the side walls of a room, so as to throw its rays obliquely upon the vases, and disperse the shadows thrown by the top tiers upon the lower ones. This lighting must not be forgotten. When arranging pot-plants, either through or upon a table, the side lights are then decidedly necessary to remove the shadows thrown by the foliage either upon the flowers beneath or upon the tablecloth.

Pot-plants are much employed to decorate tables, but they are not generally desirable as ornaments for large dinner parties when cut flowers can be had. When placed in china pots, of however beautiful a form or design, they seem to impart a heaviness to the table, particularly when many are used. The pot itself is so conspicuous that one fails to realize the beauty of the plant above it, and its thick foliage intercepts the view; besides, a plant must be exceedingly well grown to present a finished look on every side. The removal or sinking of the pot is the only way to obviate this difficulty, and to arrange the decoration as a low one, and to surround the centre flower with foliage and other plants, so as to give the appearance of its growing in a bed of ferns and flowers. The accompanying Fig. 1. shows the section of a table through which a pot-plant can be placed. The leaves of the table are withdrawn, the pot is placed in position resting upon a cross piece of wood fastened for that purpose to the under part of the table, and the leaves are then screwed back to their places, but not allowed to meet, pieces of wood being

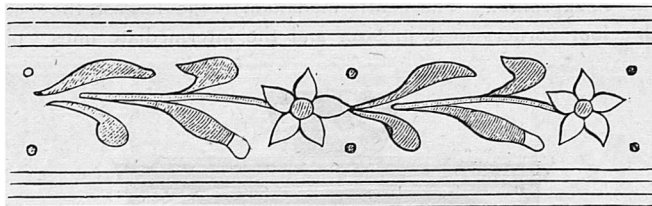


FIG. 1.—STENCILLING AND GILDING.

inserted at intervals in the space left to prevent any sudden jerk closing them, and thus injuring the stem of the plant. Another plan is to have a pine leaf made either of the size of the one whose place it takes, or smaller; in this leaf a circular hole is cut to allow of the pot being dropped through it, and a strong box is pushed underneath the table for the pot to rest upon. Several pot-plants can be arranged down the table by opening the leaves and dropping the pots through, and allowing them to rest upon some temporary erection

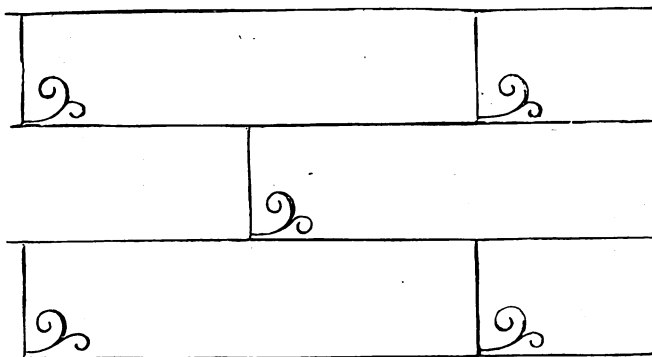


FIG. 2.—STENCILLING AND GILDING.

beneath. Small palms are the plants generally used for this kind of decoration, but unless quite young they are too large for most dinner tables, and preference should be given to smaller and flowering plants, foliage plants, and ferns.

Fig. 2 gives the appearance of one of these pot decorations. The plant is a *Dracæna magnifica*, of a deep red tint, and is surrounded by a shallow tin receptacle, filled with fern fronds and lycopodium, and a few white flowers placed among the foliage according to the

season; the larger flowers, such as camellias, roses, azaleas, being preferable to smaller varieties. The color being supplied by the pot-plant, it is only necessary to have a few handsome flowers mixed with the green at the base. When the plant itself is covered with blossom, the flowers that are arranged beneath it must contrast with it, and be largely mixed with ferns and lycopods.

The disadvantage of sinking these pots through the table is that two tablecloths are required instead of

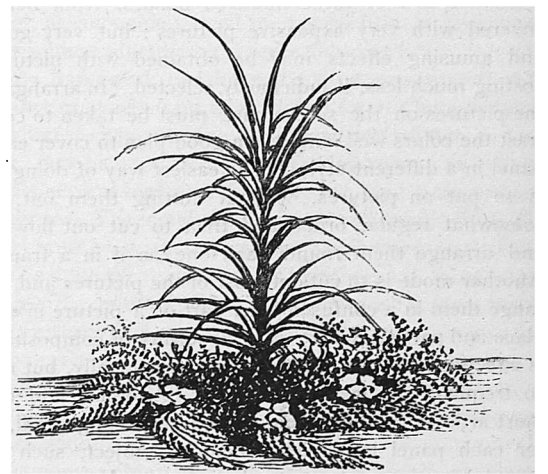


FIG. 2.—DINNER-TABLE DECORATIONS.

one. They must be laid on down the length of the table, and overlap each other about an inch, being pinned together in places where it does not show, and ironed so that the folds may lie quite flat. The places through which the plant appears must be flattened as far as possible, and a piece of tin sheeting laid over the place where the flat tin troughs for the flowers come, so that no wet and drooping leaves stain the tablecloth. Zinc would perhaps be preferable to the tin, as with it there would be no risk of iron mold if any of the water should be spilled or the troughs leak a little.

STENCILLING AND GILDING.

I.

DURING recent years the art of mural painting has been much revived, and it is likely to become important in the decorations of the future. Omitting present reference to fresco and encaustic, we will speak of the simpler art of stencilling that may be practised by an amateur, and even by people who have no knowledge of drawing. It is very inexpensive, and covers many an otherwise unsightly wall with beauty at a small cost.

The first thing to be considered is the style of building to be decorated, and the patterns that would assimilate best with its purpose. Thus a church requires set patterns, with sombre and rich coloring, while for a public hall or dwelling-house bright trailing patterns can be safely used, with gilding. For a really successful design, care must be taken that each part is in proportion, and that the colors are not in discord; and to obtain a perfect whole, no one part of the design must strike upon the eye so prominently as to engross the attention to the exclusion of the rest of the patterns, and a building painted from half a dozen patterns, well grouped and matched as to color, will look better, and be in far better taste than one crowded with a heterogeneous medley of designs.

The materials required for water-color stencilling are as follows: Colors in powder, japaners' gold-size, varnish, common size, turpentine, hog's-hair and sable brushes, square of glass, T-square, foot-rule, string and lead weight, mahlstick, earthen pots of various sizes, and gilder's cushion and knife.

Before beginning to color a wall, a builder's opinion must be taken as to whether it is dry enough to receive and retain the colors. A brick wall well covered with plaster is the best surface, and where the white of the plaster is retained as the ground color, no further preparation is needed. In all cases time must be allowed to elapse between building and decorating.

Should the pattern be for a brick or stone wall un-

plastered, a sufficient quantity of size must be melted down in a saucepan with twice its quantity of water, and the walls being freed from dust, they must be brushed carefully over with this solution, no space being omitted.

When it is wished to color the plaster and not retain its white surface as a ground, the wall must be examined and mended with putty and plaster of Paris, should any pieces be broken away, and then brushed over with a mixture of one pound of glue dissolved in one gallon of hot water, thickened with red lead and size, and allowed to dry. Then in a large paint-pot put three pounds of gilders' whiting, cover it with water, leave until broken up, and then pour off the water and stir with a stick. Melt size, stain it to the tint desired for the ground of the wall, pour it upon the whiting, and strain while warm. Let it stand for several days, and use when it is in a weak and trembling state. Apply it to the walls with a long hog's-hair brush; work from top to bottom and cover the ground as you proceed, as no retouching can be done. All colors dry lighter than when first put on. White is never used for a ground unless mixed with umber, blue, or ochre, to take off its staring crude appearance.

Should the persons desirous of stencilling be good draughtsmen, they can draw and originate their own patterns; but should they be unable to do so, they can obtain their patterns ready marked out for them. The patterns are usually cut out upon thin strips of oiled paper.

Let us suppose it is desired to paint a church, where the roof and the wall join. The straight line of the roof requires that a straight pattern should be employed, and the depth of the pattern must depend upon the height of the wall, a depth of thirty-six inches being an average size. Three straight lines are drawn with a rule the entire length of the wall, close to the roof, with intervals of two inches between. These are afterward filled in with contrasting bands of color. Then a line is drawn to the depth of fourteen inches below the lowest band to hold the set pattern, and three more two-inch lines are drawn below it, and filled with bands of color like those above.

Then the pattern is prepared. It must not be more than twenty-four inches in length, as it is held in its place on the wall by the hand, and it is better to have more than one of these if there is a long wall to cover, as too frequent use makes the edges moist and uneven. Care must be taken that the pattern has guiding lines and marks to show where the next pattern is to join on.

The design here selected (Fig. 1) is the church passion flower, one full-blown flower, three leaves, and a bud, making the pattern. This is laid evenly on the space left between the lines, which space has a ground color of ochre upon it; the color of the leaves, stems, and part of buds, which are of a chocolate brown, is applied with a stiff hog's-hair brush (the powder color is mixed with turpentine and japanners' gold-size very stiffly); the space left for the flower is filled in with white, also the upper portion of the buds; if the pattern is held firmly and closely in its place, and the color not put on wet, when the oiled paper is removed the design is clearly painted on the wall, and is as clean and well defined as if really drawn by the hand. When several patterns are thus completed the painting should be gone over again with a sable brush, the edges of the flower marked out with black, the centre filled in with yellow, the small rounds at the side of the pattern with red, and the bars that join the pattern painted over. The bands on the outside can be filled in according to taste, but it must not be forgotten that in all church decorations, dull greens, browns, reds, and grays are the proper colors to use, with a little gold and vermillion here and there introduced, as bright colors used in abundance do not produce the same effect as a judicious dull coloring with here and there a dash of gold or red.

Having completed the design that ornaments the space on the building where roof and wall meet, it is now time to mark out upon the plaster lines to give the appearance of massive stones; these lines are continued to within three feet of the floor; the three feet thus left being afterward colored, according to taste and agreement with design, either an Indian red, chocolate,

or deep green. The Indian red is desirable where light and warmth are required in the church; the deep green when there is already too much light, and it requires subduing. To mark the stones upon a high wall, take the perpendicular lines first. Measure off three feet from the length of the wall at its top, and from the length of the wall at its base, and mark the places; then take the plumb line, which must be long enough to reach from top to base, chalk it thoroughly with white chalk or whiting, and hold it firmly and tightly to the marks made at the top and bottom of the wall; the

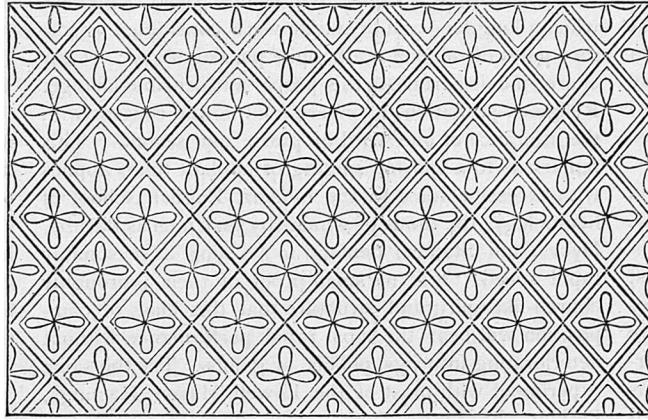


FIG. 3.—STENCILLING AND GILDING.

whiting on the string will come off on to the wall, and make a perfectly straight line down the wall, whatever its height. Repeat this at the same distance the whole length required, then obtain the horizontal lines by stretching the chalked line from point to point across the walls, but with a distance of only a foot and a half between the lines. Follow these chalked lines steadily with a brush full of color, and with the help of a ruler, but only color the horizontal lines in the manner shown in the accompanying design (Fig. 2).

The corners of the stones can be ornamented with a scroll stencilled on, or left plain. The windows, should

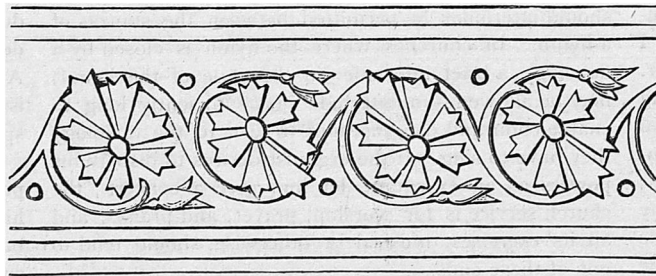


FIG. 4.—STENCILLING AND GILDING.

there be any in the wall, do not interfere, as the plumb line can be drawn across them easily. Round their embrasures a pattern assimilating to the one on the top of the wall should be stencilled; it is not necessary that these patterns should contain the same flowers or colors, but it is good taste to have them both of a set pattern, or of flowers, whichever may be chosen, and their colors should harmonize with each other. A broad line of some dark color, or a small Vandyke pattern, should connect the stones with the three feet of color, and then the side wall is complete. For chancel or side chapel much gilding and handsome diaper patterns are re-

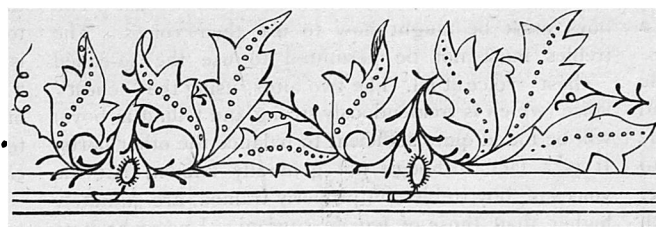


FIG. 5.—STENCILLING AND GILDING.

quired. The diaper pattern should be carried up to a height of six or seven feet from the ground. The accompanying pattern (Fig. 3) should be done thus: The ground color having been painted as before directed, and the pattern carefully cut out upon the oiled paper and laid on the wall, the diagonal lines should be brushed over with their desired color, and the spaces or stars that are to be gilded drawn round the edges of the cut pattern with white paint, or brushed entirely over with white paint; then, removing the stencilling plate, continue the same process until the whole of the

wall to be painted has its rough pattern, and then prepare for gilding—an operation that requires patience and strict attention to rules, although it is a simple mechanical process.

The materials necessary are cotton wool, whiting, a cushion, knife, tip, thick and short camel's hair brush, books of gold-leaf, and fat oil size or japanners' size. The gold-leaf is sold in books that contain twenty-five leaves, and it is also sold by the hundred leaves. It varies in color from the darkest red gold to the palest yellow. The knife is a sharp palette knife. The cushion is a piece of wood covered tightly with leather. Care must be taken that the gold-size is of the very best, but japanners' size is much used, though fat oil size is far its superior, particularly when the painting is exposed in damp places.

Commence by tying the whiting into a small muslin bag, and plentifully dust it over the parts not to be gilded. This prevents the gold-leaf sticking where it is not required; then the stars to be gilded must be painted smoothly over with oil size. It must then dry. Some size requires twelve to thirty-six hours to dry; others, such as japanners', only thirty minutes, though much depends upon the position and dryness of the walls. Those who use oil size should size over night, as it is then fit to be worked upon the next day. It is ready for use when on touching it it feels clammy and sticky, and has no appearance of running.

If left too long, and no longer sticky, it is too dry for use, and must be done over again. The gold-leaf is then shaken on the cushion near the end, and one leaf is taken from the heap and laid perfectly flat upon the cushion with the aid of the knife; the tip is then taken up and brushed lightly over the hair of the painter to acquire sufficient greasiness to allow the gold leaf to adhere to it. Raise the tip with the leaf on it and lay it on the size; continue this operation until the pattern is quite covered, allowing each leaf to overlap the preceding one a small space, and working from left to right. It does not matter if the gold-leaf is too large for the star; the pieces beyond the sizing can be removed, but every nook and cranny of the pattern must be covered with the leaf, and to fill these up the leaf can be cut on the cushion into any number of small pieces.

Then, with the cotton wool, press the gold-leaf very firmly down upon the size, being careful to leave no air bubbles, but that all should be perfectly flat and adhering, and remove the pieces of gold that hang from the pattern.

Now rub the gilding over with wash leather, and when quite dry dilute one-third of pure size in two-thirds of clear water, and brush over the surface of the gold to enrich and preserve it, and should the pattern be painted in a position where it is liable to be rubbed against, give the gilding a coating of mastic varnish, softened and diluted with a small quantity of turpentine.

When all the gilding is done, the remainder of the painting must be completed. The long diagonal lines being marked, the ground color requires no more treatment, but the lines that include each gilded star in a diamond must now be ruled, and the space inside them and surrounding the star painted with a camel's-hair brush of a dark shade, but of the same color as the long diagonal lines, and then the diaper pattern is complete, unless the painter likes to put a narrow border round the top of the pattern. The border (Fig. 4) is a very effective one, and looks best on a white ground. It can be enlarged for use by drawing small squares over it, and squares to the size required upon another sheet of paper; and making whatever portion of the pattern is in the small square fit into the large one.

For the margin of a square roof that is of oak or other wood, the accompanying design (Fig. 5) is very suitable. The lines on its outside should be filled in with bright bands of color, and the plain surface in the centre of the roof should be powdered over with a geometrical pattern in gold. "Powdering" is a technical term that is used when geometrical or diaper patterns are arranged over flat surfaces of color. The leaves should be colored in two or more shades of one color; pink shaded with maroon, light green with dark, gold with chocolate, Indian red lightened with salmon, and the raised dots on the leaves brought out with white or gold.